University Grants Commission (UGC), there are 1923 teaching posts out of 9261 teaching posts lying vacant in Central Universities as on 31/10/2007 (21%). The Commission has so far collected information from 74 State Universities where 627 teaching positions are vacant as on 1/5/2007. The UGC has been advising all the Central Universities to fill up the vacant posts in Universities. It has also issued a circular (dated 23/3/2006) to all State Governments to fill up the vacant teaching posts as per norms of the Commission, because appointment of faculty on contract, part-time and as guest-faculty on long-term basis affects the quality of higher education. The Central Government has already increased the age of superannuation from 62 years to 65 years in respect of teachers of Centrally funded Technical and Higher Educational Institutions which come under the purview of Ministry of Human Resource Development to overcome the shortage of experienced teachers. The State Governments have also been requested to take similar action.

Regulatory mechanism for private educational institutes

2840. SHRI GIREESH KUMAR SANGHI:
SHRIMATI SUPRIYA SULE:

Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the National Knowledge Commission appointed by Government, is in favour of regulatory mechanism for private educational institutions in the country to ensure good quality education;

(b) if so, whether, according to them there should be some kind of regulatory mechanism for privately run educational institutions;

(c) whether they have already made recommendations in this regard to Government; and

(d) if so, how many of its recommendations have, so far, been implemented?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRIMATI D. PURANDESWARI): (a) to (d) In its Report to the Nation (2006) the National Knowledge Commission (NKC) has made several recommendations pertaining to higher education. One of the recommendations of the NKC is to change the system of regulation for higher education. The NKC has recommended establishment of an Independent Regulatory of Higher Education, which would be responsible for setting the criteria and deciding on entry; agency authorized to accord degree granting power to higher education institutions, responsible for monitoring and settling disputes, be the authority for licensing accreditation and would apply exactly the same norms for public and private institutions, just as it would apply the same norms to domestic and international institutions. However, no decision has been taken on the recommendations made by the NKC.

Shortage of faculty in IITs and IIMs

2841. SHRI T.T.V DHINAKARAN: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is severe shortage of faculty in higher technical institutions like Indian Institutes of Technology and Indian Institutes of Management;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(c) the action taken to fill up the vacancies?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRIMATI D. PURANDESWARI): (a) and (b) Due to extremely good employment opportunities, as a consequence of globalization, good B. Tech. students are not opting for higher studies *viz.* M. Tech./Ph.D. As a result, it has become difficult to get suitable candidates, fulfilling eligibility criteria/standard required for faculty in the Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs) for which minimum requirement is Ph.D. Similarly, migration of faculty to financially more lucrative assignments with the country and abroad, have resulted in general shortage of good quality and experienced faculty in the IIMs.

(c) IITs are autonomous Institutions and recruitment of faculty is done by them as per their respective Statutes and not by the Government. Recruitment of faculty is a continuous process and all out efforts are made by the Institutes to fill up the vacant posts. The Institutes have been employing suitable strategies to attract and retain quality faculty which include providing of good residential accommodation, good medical facilities, initial research grants, financial support for participation in national/international conferences, suitable scheme for sharing of consultancy charges, etc. IIMs are also making continuous efforts to retain/recruit quality faculty from within the country and abroad to increase their faculty strength.

Priority for opening Navodaya Vidyalayas

†2842. SHRI HARISH RAWAT: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any proposal to accord priority to backward, remote and unaccessible hilly regions for opening of Navodaya Vidyalayas;

(b) whether it is a fact that there are still many backward districts in the country where Navodaya Vidyalayas have not been opened; and

(c) if so, the details thereof and the names of districts where Navodaya Vidyalayas have not been opened, State-wise?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRIMATI D. PURANDESWARI): (a) As per the existing Scheme of Navodaya Vidyalaya, one Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalaya (JNV) is envisaged in each district of the country.

(b) and (c) There are 554 functional JNVs in the country in as many districts. 45 districts in the country (excluding Tamil Nadu) do not have any JNV. Out of 45 uncovered districts, 6 districts are not eligible for having a JNV as these districts do not have rural population. The State-wise list of remaining 39 uncovered districts in the country is enclosed as statement.

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.